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THE KEITH FAMILY

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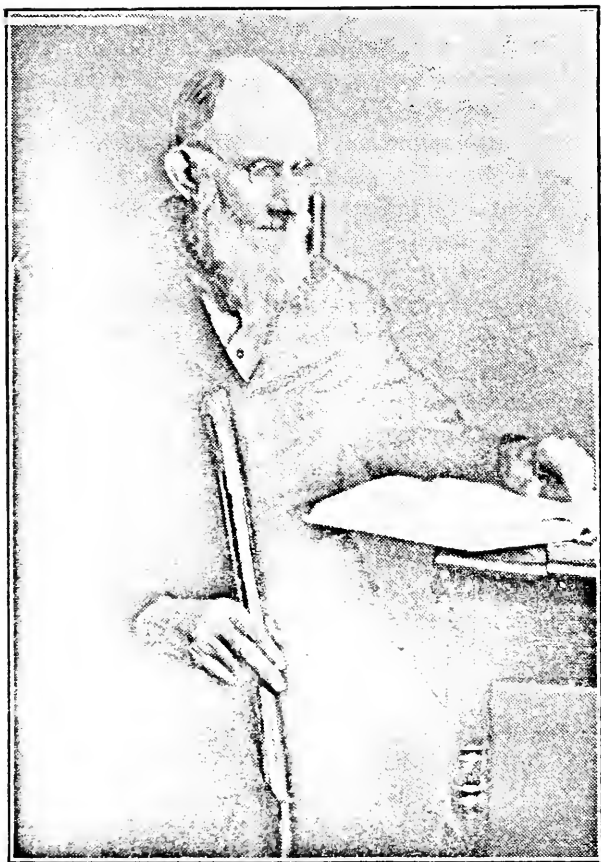
HISTORICAL SKETCH

Compiled and Published by  
CHARLES WINTERSMITH KEITH  
Ripley, Illinois





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CHARLES WINTERSMITH KEITH



7.20.1971

Charles Wintersmith Keith was born on the 18th day of August, 1828, near a small creek called Buck creek in Harrison county, Indiana, which was very close to the line between Harrison and Floyd counties. My father, Jacob Keith, died before my recollection. About the first that I remember was when I saw my mother and her second husband, Brigadier Gen. John Thomas, coming home on horse back after their marriage. We lived in Floyd county, Indiana, near a creek called Indian creek, five miles west of New Albany. Some time after their marriage my step-father moved the family to Washington county, Indiana, and after living there a couple of years he moved to Vigo county, Indiana, within nine miles of Terre Haute, and settled on his son's farm, (his son's name was Owen Thomas,) and lived on this farm until his death, which was caused by a rose cancer, which destroyed one whole side of his face. His death left mother a poor widow with two grown daughters and a son 11 years old, and the subject of this sketch who was just past seven years of age. My brother, Isaac, was 4 years and 7 months my senior. Mother went some seven or eight miles north and rented a small place with some land and moved to the rented place, sowing a small patch of oats and ten acres of corn. This was all the land we could get that year and the work was all done with the help of one horse. We raised enough corn, after paying the rent, to keep the horse and two cows and fatten two hogs. The next year we obtained a larger place and gained more, and I being old enough to help in the work we continued in this way until 1841. My oldest sister, Priscilla, was married to John F. T. McKee and in 1843 we all moved to Cumberland county, Illinois, and farmed until the fall of 1845, when mother and my youngest



sister, Caroline, and myself went back to Floyd county, Indiana, brother Isaac having gone back the spring before.

In 1846 the Mexican war came on. Volunteers were being solicited and with others I enlisted. I was under 18 years of age and my mother went to the recruiting officer and had him erase my name from the roll. The sequel proved that the company that I had enlisted in failed to get its quota made up in time and all the three regiments were full so we were left out. Then I worked out as a laboring hand until the spring of 1847, when I became engaged to, and married Miss Amanda Hankins on the 8th day of April, 1847. Then, thought I, now I will bestir myself and make a living for myself and wife.

All went on well for a while, but we had not been married quite two months when a terrible calamity came. While working with an other man with a whip-saw, on the 3d day of June, I met with an accident that crippled me for life. My right leg was crushed by the log we were sawing, falling on it. The limb was in such a condition that it could not be healed and is yet a running sore. It was a little over a year before I was able to do manual labor, but since I have been able to work I have endeavored to make an honest living as best I could under my crippled condition.

On February 14, 1849, our first child was born and we named her Mary Ann Rebecca, after her two grandmothers. She died January 27th, 1851.

Elizabeth Cerepta was born October 17, 1850. She was married to John Taylor Roberts January 1, 1867, and to them were born three children, Mary Amanda, Birthel Keith and Altie Myrtle, all of whom are married. Mary A. married Edward Hale at Fort Scott, Kansas. They have one son named Harry. Birthel K. is married and has one daughter. (I have never learned his wife's name or his daughter's.) Altie M. was married to Henry E. Cameron, from whom she has since been divorced.



Our next child was born October 7, 1853 and was named Jacob Henry. He died November 9, 1854, aged one year, one month and two days.

Francis Wintersmith was born April 30, 1855 and is still living and unmarried.

John Henry was born April 26, 1857, and died October 26, 1858.

Charles Homer Hodgen was born April 26, 1859. He enlisted in the Spanish-American war at San Antonio, Texas, and served at Cuba until the close of that war, when he was mustered out at Galveston, Texas, March 20, 1899. On the 4th of April, 1899, he came home, having been absent about thirteen years. The following August he again enlisted in Co. K. 34th Reg. U. S. volunteers, and went to the Philippine Islands. He was promoted to 1st sergeant and was honorably discharged at Precedio, California in April, 1901. He died June 10, 1908, from diseases contracted in the service. He was united in marriage to Miss Laurel Leatha Burke June 25, 1905, and on February 2, 1907, a daughter was born to them and named Leatha Lucille. She, with a widowed mother, survives him.

Our next was Abraham Lincoln, who was born May 25, 1861. He was married to Adah Estella Hurd, December 22, 1881, from whom he is now divorced. They had two sons, Chester Arthur and Hoyt Edgar. Chester Arthur, born December 29, 1882, is now married and has one daughter. They live at Ottawa, Kansas. Hoyt Edgar, born May 18, 1887, is at this writing in the regular army in Co. 78, Heavy Artillery, stationed at Fort Moultri, South Carolina.

Our next was Julietta Keith, born July 1, 1863. She was married to David J. Collins at Fort Scott, Kansas, December 28, 1887, and they now live in Kansas City, Missouri. To them were born one daughter and two sons: Grace Vira, born May 1, 1889, died June 2, 1889, aged 1 month and 1 day; Claudius Franklin, born June 14th, 1890, is now serving in the





United States navy; Herman Keith Collins, born April 12, 1893, is now with his parents in Kansas City, Mo.

Nancy Elvira Keith was born May 1, 1866. She was married to Arthur E. Nokes September 28, 1892. To them was born one daughter, who died in infancy. They live in Kansas City, Missouri.

Evalena Keith was born November 21 1868. She married Francis E. O'Neal November 28, 1898, and died January 20, 1908. Three sons were born to them: Paul Wesley, born February 26, 1900; Daniel Arthur, born June 30, 1902; Francis Kenneth Keith O'Neal, born December 6, 1904. The children were all born in Ripley. They moved to Rushville, Illinois about three years ago. Their father still lives with them at the same place.

As above stated, we were married in Floyd county, Indiana, where our first child was born. After I had somewhat recovered from the accident above mentioned, we moved to Ripley, Illinois, arriving here on the 9th day of September, 1849, and have made it our home ever since. I then learned the potter's trade and worked at that about thirty-five years.

On the 19th day of June, 1853, I became a member of the Primitive Baptist church, and was a member of that church until August, 1890, when the church became dissolved and letters of dismission were given to all of the remaining members to join any other church of our faith. Soon after this dissolution I united with Mt. Gilead church of Brown county, Illinois, by letter, and I still remain an unworthy member of that church.

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Now I will give a short history of my father's family. My father's name was Jacob Keith. He was born in the state of Virginia, September 13, 1776. He came to Kentucky when quite young and grew to manhood, when he was united in marriage to his cousin, Miss Rebecca Hodgen, September 6, 1803.



She was born on a flat boat while her parents were moving from Virginia, on November 4, 1784. Some time after their marriage (I have not the dates) they both united with the Primitive Baptist church, called No Linn church, and were baptized by Elder Warren Cash. Father afterwards became a preacher and served in that line during his life.

There were eleven children born to them, as follows:

Harriet Keith was born July 7, 1804 and died August 18, 1816, being 11 years, 1 month and 11 days old.

Sally Keith was born November 4, 1805; died November 1, 1806, aged 11 months and 24 days.

Nehemiah Keith was born February 14, 1807; died March 23, 1831, aged 74 years, 1 month and 21 days.

Mary Elizabeth Keith was born June 10, 1809; died August 15, 1816, aged 7 years, 7 months and 5 days.

Phoebe Keith was born June 11, 1810; died August 13, 1820, aged 16 years, 2 months, lacking two days.

Priscilla Keith was born March 10, 1812; died November 29, 1856, aged 44 years, 7 months and 19 days.

William Robert Keith was born November 18, 1815; died June 13, 1821, aged 6 years, 5 months and 5 days.

John Keith was born October 14, 1818; died when young, there being no record of his death.

Caroline Keith was born October 2, 1820; died January 10, 1848, aged 28 years, 2 months and 26 days.

Isaac Hodgen Keith was born January 1, 1824; died August 27, 1891, aged 67 years, 7 months and 27 days.

Charles Wintersmith's birth and age are given at the head of this sketch.



My brother, Nehemiah Keith, was married to Mary Hardy in 1832. They had five children, but I have no dates of their birth or death. Their first was Susan, who died young. Jacob Charles was married to Martha Cash and raised a family of nine children. His first son was Elder John N. Keith, born in 1860. He married Mary Teterson and to them were born ten children. Phoebe Keith married Benjamin F. Peter and moved to Polk county, Iowa, at an early day. They raised quite a family of children. Next was Enos B. Keith, who married a German lady; have never heard her name or whether they had any children. William R. D. O. Keith was married and lived in Kentucky. J. C. Keith lived in Grason county, Kentucky, and Enos B. Keith lived in Georgetown, Floyd county, Indiana, when I last heard from them.

Priscilla Keith married John F. T. McKee in June, 1841. They had two children: Lebeous Erastus and Nancy Bradly. The members of this family are all dead.

Caroline Keith had one daughter, Rebecca Park Moore, who is still living. She was married to Augustus Hankins (now dead), and seven children were born as follows: Effie Daugherty lives at Colchester, Illinois, Route No. 4; Charles Seward lives in Oklahoma and is a widower with three children; Orville married and has a family now living near Ashland, Kansas; Etta was married, but died soon after; Nora married a McDonald and lives at Abingdon, Illinois; Albert A. Hankins, who is a Methodist Episcopal minister, lives near Ashland, Kansas, and has five children; Della married Homer Gleckley and lives at Winfield, Kansas; Myrtle married Elmer Walingford, has four children and lives at Ashland, Kansas.

Isaac H. Keith married Wilhelmina Henrietta Hankins August 1, 1847. To them were born five children, all of whom died in infancy. The children were: Richard Hodgen, John Henry, Melvina, Charles



Wintersmith, and an infant not named. All the family are dead.

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I will now state what I have been told and the records I have of my grandparents. I have no dates of the births of Grandfather William Keith and wife, nor dates of marriage or death of either, but he was married to Elizabeth (called Betsy) Larue about 1770. To them were born the following children: Jacob Keith, (my father) John, Henry, Isaac, William, Jesse and Daniel. The last named, who was unmarried, died at my father's house. There were three daughters: Sarah, Amy and Priscilla. Sarah married J. Edwards, Amy married Caleb Carman, and Priscilla married Shadrick Duncan. This is the extent of my knowledge of the history of my Grandfather Keith's family.

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I will now give the record I have of my grandfather, Robert Hodgen, who was married July 31, 1775, to Sarah Larue, (a sister of Grandmother Keith.) Grandfather Hodgen was born August 7, 1742. My grandmother was born September 6, 1755. Following are the children: Robert Hodgen jr., the son of a former wife who is not given in the record I have, was born April 23, 1765. Susanna, also by the first wife, was born October 3, 1767. She was married to Gen. John Thomas in 1786 and died after having raised quite a family of children. The general was then married to my mother in 1831. Joseph Hodgen was born January 8, 1770 and William Hodgen May 14, 1772. These are all the children of the first marriage.

Margaret Hodgen, the daughter of Robert and Sarah Hodgen, was born May 14th, 1776; Phoebe Hodgen, October 18, 1777; Isaac Hodgen, August 8, 1779; Sarah Hodgen, September 7, 1781; John Hodgen, September 28, 1783; Rebecca Hodgen, (my mother,) November 4, 1784; Elizabeth Hodgen, January 26, 1787; Mary Hodgen, October 23, 1788; Samuel Hod-





gen, September 30, 1791; Jacob Hodgen, January 3, 1793; James Hodgen, — 18, 1795; Jabes Hodgen, — 29, 1800.

Elizabeth Hodgen was married to a man by the name of Wintersmith, (his given name is not given in the record I have,) August 1, 1811. To them were born two sons: Charles, for whom I was named, and Robert. Elizabeth died May 4, 1819.

Margaret Hodgen married William Vertreese and moved to Illinois, settling in Warren county, near Monmouth, where she died.

Jacob Hodgen was married November 29, 1818, (wife's name not given.) Moved to Illinois and settled in Pike county near Pittsfield. He was a minister of the Christian church.

James Hodgen was married January 15, 1824. He also settled in Warren county, near Monmouth, but later emigrated to Oregon.

Rebecca Hodgen was married to Jacob Keith, September 6, 1803.

Phoebe Hodgen was married to Jacob Larue in 1796. They came to Illinois and settled in Coles county, near Charleston. They had six children: John, James, Adkin, (a mute,) Phoebe, Margaret and Elizabeth.

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I will now give my affiliation in politics. My first presidential vote was for Gen. Winfield Scott, who was defeated by Franklin Pierce. After that the Whig party divided, some going to the Democrats and others to the Republican party. The new party was stigmatized the Abolition party and wanted to free the slaves at all hazards. Although I was opposed to the institution of slavery, I was also opposed to having them liberated among us. I was young and not well posted, and was induced to vote for James Buchanan. After I learned the principles of the Republican party, I cut the hame string and slid out of the Democratic harness, bidding it a lasting farewell.



The principles of the Republicans were not to meddle with the institution of slavery where it existed by local law, but to prohibit it from extending into the territories that should be acquired. I adopted the Republican party and still remain in it.

To my fellow citizens I feel grateful for the honors conferred upon me. I have served in the office of justice of the peace, and if I live until the first of May, 1909, will be forty years continuously in that office. In 1882 I served one year as town supervisor. I served two terms as assessor; two terms as town collector; two terms, three years each, as commissioner of highways; two terms, three years each, as school director; four years as school trustee. In our town incorporation I was one of the organizers and one of the first trustees of the organization. Had the honor of getting up the articles to change the organization from a town incorporation to a village organization, which, under the law, required six trustees instead of five. Later, the law required that a president of the board of trustees should be elected besides the six trustees. I have had the honor of filling the office of trustee and have been president of the board. I have been honored a number of times with the office of village clerk and I have served on the grand jury fourteen terms of circuit court of Brown county.

In conclusion, I have this to say, that for all of the above honors, which were conferred on me without being asked for, I feel grateful to the citizens of Ripley. My principles always have been to let the office seek the man, rather than the man seek the office. I have never electioneered for office for myself, for I want all voters to be free to vote unbiasedly for whom they think best. It is a privilege I ask for myself and I want to accord the same to others.

Yours truly,

CHARLES WINTERSMITH KEITH.

August 24, 1908.















